

PATENT
Customer No. 22,852
Attorney Docket No. 5725.0869-02

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:)
)
Jean-Louis H. GUERET)
)
Rule 53(b) Continuation of)
Application No. 09/195,710) Prior Art Unit: 3732
)
Filed: Herewith) Prior Examiner: E. Robert
)
For: PRODUCT APPLICATOR AND)
PACKAGING UNIT COMPRISING)
SUCH APPLICATOR)

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Prior to initial examination, please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please delete claims 1-22 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please add claims 23-222 as follows:

--23. (New) A layered product applicator comprising:

an application portion comprising a first end of a flexible support, said

application portion being configured to apply a cosmetic product; and

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a flexible elongated gripping portion comprising a second end of the flexible support and at least one layer of a flexible material covering the second end of the flexible support, the flexibility of said material of said at least one layer being greater than the flexibility of the support, said flexible material being impervious to the cosmetic product.

24. (New) A layered product applicator comprising:

an application portion comprising a first end of a flexible support; and

a flexible elongated gripping portion comprising a second end of the flexible support and at least one layer of a flexible material covering the second end of the flexible support, the flexibility of said material of said at least one layer being greater than the flexibility of the support,

wherein the flexible support comprises cardboard.

25. (New) The applicator of claim 23, wherein the application portion comprises a tuft of bristles coupled to the first end of the support.

26. (New) The applicator of claim 23, wherein the flexible material comprises a foam.

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27. (New) The applicator of claim 23, wherein the layer of flexible material is thicker than the support.

28. (New) The applicator of claim 23, wherein the application portion comprises at least one layer of a second flexible material coupled to the first end of the support.

29. (New) A layered product applicator comprising:
an application portion comprising a first end of a flexible support; and
a flexible elongated gripping portion comprising a second end of the flexible support and at least one layer of a flexible material covering the second end of the flexible support, the flexibility of said material of said at least one layer being greater than the flexibility of the support, said flexible material being impervious to a product to be applied,

wherein the application portion comprises at least one layer of a second flexible material coupled to the first end of the support, and wherein the application portion abuts the gripping portion.

30. (New) The applicator of claim 28, wherein the application portion abuts the gripping portion.

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31. (New) The applicator of claim 23, wherein the application portion comprises at least one layer of the flexible material coupled to the first end of the support.

32. (New) The applicator of claim 31, wherein the application portion and the gripping portion are continuous on two sides of the support.

33. (New) A layered product applicator comprising:
at least one application portion comprising a first end of a flexible support, said application portion being configured to apply a cosmetic product; and
a flexible elongated gripping portion comprising a second end of the flexible support and at least one layer of a flexible material covering the second end of the flexible support, the flexibility of said material of said at least one layer being greater than the flexibility of the support,
said at least one application portion and said gripping portion being asymmetrical with respect to one another.

34. (New) A layered product applicator comprising:
at least one application portion comprising a first end of a flexible support;
and

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a flexible elongated gripping portion comprising a second end of the flexible support and at least one layer of a flexible material covering the second end of the flexible support, the flexibility of said material of said at least one layer being greater than the flexibility of the support,

said at least one application portion and said gripping portion being asymmetrical with respect to one another,

wherein the flexible support comprises cardboard.

35. (New) The applicator of claim 33, wherein the application portion comprises a tuft of bristles coupled to the first end of the support.

36. (New) The applicator of claim 33, wherein said flexible material comprises a foam.

37. (New) The applicator of claim 33, wherein the layer of flexible material is thicker than the support.

38. (New) The application of claim 33, wherein the application portion comprises at least one layer of a second flexible material coupled to the first end of the support.

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39. (New) A layered product applicator comprising:

at least one application portion comprising a first end of a flexible support;

and

a flexible elongated gripping portion comprising a second end of the flexible support and at least one layer of a flexible material covering the second end of the flexible support, the flexibility of said material of said at least one layer being greater than the flexibility of the support,

said at least one application portion and said gripping portion being asymmetrical with respect to one another,

wherein the application portion comprises at least one layer of a second flexible material coupled to the first end of the support, and wherein the application portion abuts the gripping portion.

40. (New) The applicator of claim 38, wherein the application portion is spaced from the gripping portion.

41. (New) The applicator of claim 33, wherein the application portion comprises at least one layer of the flexible material coupled to the first end of the support.

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42. (New) The applicator of claim 33, wherein the application portion and the gripping portion are continuous on two sides of the support.

43. (New) A layered cosmetic product applicator, comprising:

a flexible support;

an application portion at a first end of the flexible support, the application portion being configured to apply cosmetic product to an individual;

a gripping portion at a second end of the flexible support opposite the first end, the gripping portion having a visual difference from the application portion, at least part of the gripping portion being covered by at least one layer of a first spongy flexible material and being configured to be contacted by at least one finger of a user during gripping of the applicator, the first material having a greater flexibility than the flexibility of the support.

44. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the flexible support includes a first planar surface and a second planar surface, the first and second planar surfaces facing away from one another.

45. (New) The applicator of claim 44, wherein the first and second planar surfaces are substantially parallel to one another.

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46. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the flexible support comprises a material chosen from cardboard, plastic, leather, and foam.

47. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the flexible support comprises a material chosen from cardboard and leather.

48. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the application portion comprises one of a tuft of bristles, a pencil brush, a feather, a foam material, a sponge material, and a baize material.

49. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the first spongy flexible material comprises a closed-cell foam impervious to the cosmetic product.

50. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the first spongy flexible material is chosen from polyurethane, polyester, polyether, polyvinyl chloride, and polyethylene.

51. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the first spongy flexible material comprises one of flocking, a fabric layer covering, and a silicone layer covering.

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52. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the first spongy flexible material is impregnated with at least one active cosmetic agent.

53. (New) The applicator of claim 52, wherein the first spongy flexible material is impregnated with at least one of an anti-bactericidal agent, a fungicide, and an agent filtering ultra-violet radiation.

54. (New) The applicator of claim 43, further comprising a layer of a second spongy flexible material on the flexible support.

55. (New) The applicator of claim 54, wherein the first spongy flexible material is identical to the second spongy flexible material.

56. (New) The applicator of claim 54, wherein the layer of the first spongy flexible material and the layer of the second spongy flexible material are on a same surface of the flexible support.

57. (New) The applicator of claim 56, wherein the second spongy flexible material is at the application portion.

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58. (New) The applicator of claim 54, wherein the layer of the first spongy flexible material and the layer of the second spongy flexible material are on oppositely-facing surfaces of the flexible support.

59. (New) The applicator of claim 58, wherein at least part of the layer of the second spongy flexible material is at the gripping portion.

60. (New) The applicator of claim 59, further comprising a layer of a third spongy flexible material at the application portion.

61. (New) The applicator of claim 60, further comprising a layer of a fourth spongy flexible material at the application portion, at least two of said layers comprising a same material.

62. (New) The applicator of claim 58, wherein the flexible support comprises a material chosen from cardboard and leather.

63. (New) The applicator of claim 58, wherein at least one of the layer of the first spongy flexible material and the layer of the second spongy flexible material extends substantially an entire length of the flexible support.

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64. (New) The applicator of claim 54, wherein the layer of the second spongy flexible material includes a thickness that is greater than a thickness of the flexible support.

65. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the gripping portion includes at least one of a different shape, a different size, and a different width than the application portion.

66. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the gripping portion includes a different shape than the application portion.

67. (New) The applicator of claim 66, wherein the gripping portion includes a substantially rectangular shape and the application portion includes a generally rounded shape.

68. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the gripping portion and the application portion are asymmetrical relative to one another.

69. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the layer of the first spongy flexible material includes a thickness that is greater than a thickness of the flexible support.

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70. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the layer of the first spongy flexible material extends substantially an entire length of the flexible support.

71. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the gripping portion is configured to be gripped between a user's finger and thumb.

72. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the flexible support is spoon-shaped.

73. (New) The applicator of claim 72, wherein the layer of the first spongy flexible material extends substantially a length of the flexible support on a first surface of the flexible support.

74. (New) The applicator of claim 73, further comprising a layer of a second spongy flexible material on a second surface of the flexible support opposite, the second surface facing away from the first surface, the layer of the second spongy flexible material extending substantially the length of the flexible support.

75. (New) A cosmetic application system, comprising:
the cosmetic product applicator of claim 43; and
a container containing a cosmetic product.

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76. (New) The system of claim 75, wherein the container contains at least a portion of the cosmetic product applicator.

77. (New) The system of claim 76, wherein the container contains at least a portion of the gripping portion of the cosmetic product applicator.

78. (New) The system of claim 75, wherein the container contains the entire cosmetic product applicator.

79. (New) The system of claim 75, wherein the container includes a receptacle for containing the cosmetic product.

80. (New) The system of claim 75, wherein the container includes a lid pivotally mounted to the receptacle.

81. (New) The system of claim 80, wherein the cosmetic product applicator is sandwiched between the lid and the receptacle.

82. (New) A method of applying a cosmetic product to a surface region, comprising:

providing the cosmetic product applicator of claim 43;

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loading the application portion of the cosmetic product applicator with a cosmetic product; and

transferring the cosmetic product from the application portion of the cosmetic product applicator to a surface region.

83. (New) The method of claim 82, further comprising spreading the cosmetic product on the surface region.

84. (New) The method of claim 82, wherein the loading of the cosmetic product applicator includes impregnating the application portion of the cosmetic product applicator with the cosmetic product.

85. (New) The method of claim 82, wherein the cosmetic product is one of eye shadow, cheek blusher, make-up foundation, eyeliner, a nail-care product, liquid lip rouge, and loose powder.

86. (New) The method of claim 82, wherein the cosmetic product is an eye makeup product and the surface region includes an eyelid.

87. (New) The method of claim 82, further comprising gripping the gripping portion between a user's finger and thumb.

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88. (New) The method of claim 87, further comprising deforming the layer of the first spongy flexible material with one of the finger and thumb during the gripping.

89. (New) The method of claim 82, further comprising flexing the flexible support during the transferring.

90. (New) A layered cosmetic product applicator, comprising:
a flexible support including a first planar surface and a second planar surface, the first and second planar surfaces facing away from one another;
an application portion at a first end of the flexible support, the application portion being configured to apply cosmetic product to an individual;
a gripping portion at a second end of the flexible support opposite the first end, the gripping portion having a visual difference from the application portion; and
a layer of a first spongy flexible material on the first planar surface at the gripping portion, the first material having a greater flexibility than the flexibility of the support.

91. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the first and second planar surfaces are substantially parallel to one another.

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92. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the flexible support comprises a material chosen from cardboard, plastic, leather, and foam.

93. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the flexible support comprises a material chosen from cardboard and leather.

94. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the application portion comprises one of a tuft of bristles, a pencil brush, a feather, a foam material, a sponge material, and a baize material.

95. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the first spongy flexible material comprises a closed-cell foam impervious to the cosmetic product.

96. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the first spongy flexible material is chosen from polyurethane, polyester, polyether, polyvinyl chloride, and polyethylene.

97. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the first spongy flexible material comprises one of flocking, a fabric layer covering, and a silicone layer covering.

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98. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the first spongy flexible material is impregnated with at least one active cosmetic agent.

99. (New) The applicator of claim 98, wherein the first spongy flexible material is impregnated with at least one of an anti-bactericidal agent, a fungicide, and an agent filtering ultra-violet radiation.

100. (New) The applicator of claim 90, further comprising a layer of a second spongy flexible material on the flexible support.

101. (New) The applicator of claim 100, wherein the first spongy flexible material is identical to the second spongy flexible material.

102. (New) The applicator of claim 100, wherein the layer of the second spongy flexible material is on the first planar surface of the flexible support.

103. (New) The applicator of claim 102, wherein the second spongy flexible material is at the application portion.

104. (New) The applicator of claim 100, wherein the layer of the second spongy flexible material is on the second planar surface of the flexible support.

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105. (New) The applicator of claim 104, wherein at least part of the layer of the second spongy flexible material is at the gripping portion.

106. (New) The applicator of claim 105, further comprising a layer of a third spongy flexible material at the application portion.

107. (New) The applicator of claim 106, further comprising a layer of a fourth spongy flexible material at the application portion, at least two of said layers comprising a same material.

108. (New) The applicator of claim 104, wherein the flexible support comprises a material chosen from cardboard and leather.

109. (New) The applicator of claim 104, wherein at least one of the layer of the first spongy flexible material and the layer of the second spongy flexible material extends substantially an entire length of the flexible support.

110. (New) The applicator of claim 100, wherein the layer of the second spongy flexible material includes a thickness that is greater than a thickness of the flexible support.

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111. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the gripping portion includes at least one of a different shape, a different size, and a different width than the application portion.

112. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the gripping portion includes a different shape than the application portion.

113. (New) The applicator of claim 112, wherein the gripping portion includes a substantially rectangular shape and the application portion includes a generally rounded shape.

114. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the gripping portion and the application portion are asymmetrical relative to one another.

115. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the layer of the first spongy flexible material includes a thickness that is greater than a thickness of the flexible support.

116. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the layer of the first spongy flexible material extends substantially an entire length of the flexible support.

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117. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the gripping portion is configured to be gripped between a user's finger and thumb.

118. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the flexible support is spoon-shaped.

119. (New) The applicator of claim 118, wherein the layer of the first spongy flexible material extends substantially a length of the flexible support.

120. (New) The applicator of claim 119, further comprising a layer of a second spongy flexible material on the second planar surface of the flexible support, the layer of the second spongy flexible material extending substantially the length of the flexible support.

121. (New) A cosmetic application system, comprising:
the cosmetic product applicator of claim 90; and
a container containing a cosmetic product.

122. (New) The system of claim 121, wherein the container contains at least a portion of the cosmetic product applicator.

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123. (New) The system of claim 122, wherein the container contains at least a portion of the gripping portion of the cosmetic product applicator.

124. (New) The system of claim 121, wherein the container contains the entire cosmetic product applicator.

125. (New) The system of claim 121, wherein the container includes a receptacle for containing the cosmetic product.

126. (New) The system of claim 121, wherein the container includes a lid pivotally mounted to the receptacle.

127. (New) The system of claim 126, wherein the cosmetic product applicator is sandwiched between the lid and the receptacle.

128. (New) A method of applying a cosmetic product to a surface region, comprising:

providing the cosmetic product applicator of claim 90;

loading the application portion of the cosmetic product applicator with a cosmetic product; and

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transferring the cosmetic product from the application portion of the
cosmetic product applicator to a surface region.

129. (New) The method of claim 128, further comprising spreading the
cosmetic product on the surface region.

130. (New) The method of claim 128, wherein the loading of the cosmetic
product applicator includes impregnating the application portion of the cosmetic product
applicator with the cosmetic product.

131. (New) The method of claim 128, wherein the cosmetic product is one of
eye shadow, cheek blusher, make-up foundation, eyeliner, a nail-care product, liquid lip
rouge, and loose powder.

132. (New) The method of claim 128, wherein the cosmetic product is an eye
makeup product and the surface region includes an eyelid.

133. (New) The method of claim 128, further comprising gripping the gripping
portion between a user's finger and thumb.

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134. (New) The method of claim 133, further comprising deforming the layer of the first spongy flexible material with one of the finger and thumb during the gripping.

135. (New) The method of claim 128, further comprising flexing the flexible support during the transferring.

136. (New) A layered cosmetic product applicator, comprising:

an elongated flexible support including a first planar surface and a second planar surface, the first and second planar surfaces facing away from one another;

an application portion at a first end of the flexible support, the application portion being configured to apply cosmetic product to an individual;

a gripping portion at a second end of the flexible support opposite the first end; and

a layer of a first spongy flexible material on the first planar surface at the gripping portion, the first material having a greater flexibility than the flexibility of the support.

137. (New) The applicator of claim 136, wherein the first and second planar surfaces are substantially parallel to one another.

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138. (New) The applicator of claim 136, wherein the flexible support comprises a material chosen from cardboard, plastic, leather, and foam.

139. (New) The applicator of claim 136, wherein the flexible support comprises a material chosen from cardboard and leather.

140. (New) The applicator of claim 136, wherein the application portion comprises one of a tuft of bristles, a pencil brush, a feather, a foam material, a sponge material, and a baize material.

141. (New) The applicator of claim 136, wherein the first spongy flexible material comprises a closed-cell foam impervious to the cosmetic product.

142. (New) The applicator of claim 136, wherein the first spongy flexible material is chosen from polyurethane, polyester, polyether, polyvinyl chloride, and polyethylene.

143. (New) The applicator of claim 136, wherein the first spongy flexible material comprises one of flocking, a fabric layer covering, and a silicone layer covering.

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144. (New) The applicator of claim 136, wherein the first spongy flexible material is impregnated with at least one active cosmetic agent.

145. (New) The applicator of claim 144, wherein the first spongy flexible material is impregnated with at least one of an anti-bactericidal agent, a fungicide, and an agent filtering ultra-violet radiation.

146. (New) The applicator of claim 136, further comprising a layer of a second spongy flexible material on the flexible support.

147. (New) The applicator of claim 146, wherein the first spongy flexible material is identical to the second spongy flexible material.

148. (New) The applicator of claim 146, wherein the layer of the second spongy flexible material is on the first planar surface of the flexible support.

149. (New) The applicator of claim 148, wherein the second spongy flexible material is at the application portion.

150. (New) The applicator of claim 146, wherein the layer of the second spongy flexible material is on the second planar surface of the flexible support.

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151. (New) The applicator of claim 150, wherein at least part of the layer of the second spongy flexible material is at the gripping portion.

152. (New) The applicator of claim 151, further comprising a layer of a third spongy flexible material at the application portion.

153. (New) The applicator of claim 152, further comprising a layer of a fourth spongy flexible material at the application portion, at least two of said layers comprising a same material.

154. (New) The applicator of claim 150, wherein the flexible support comprises a material chosen from cardboard and leather.

155. (New) The applicator of claim 150, wherein at least one of the layer of the first spongy flexible material and the layer of the second spongy flexible material extends substantially an entire length of the flexible support.

156. (New) The applicator of claim 146, wherein the layer of the second spongy flexible material includes a thickness that is greater than a thickness of the flexible support.

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158. (New) The applicator of claim 136, wherein the gripping portion includes a different shape than the application portion.

159. (New) The applicator of claim 158, wherein the gripping portion includes a substantially rectangular shape and the application portion includes a generally rounded shape.

160. (New) The applicator of claim 136, wherein the gripping portion and the application portion are asymmetrical relative to one another.

161. (New) The applicator of claim 136, wherein the layer of the first spongy flexible material includes a thickness that is greater than a thickness of the flexible support.

162. (New) The applicator of claim 136, wherein the layer of the first spongy flexible material extends substantially an entire length of the flexible support.

163. (New) The applicator of claim 136, wherein the gripping portion is configured to be gripped between a user's finger and thumb.

164. (New) The applicator of claim 136, wherein the flexible support is spoon-shaped.

165. (New) The applicator of claim 164, wherein the layer of the first spongy flexible material extends substantially a length of the flexible support.

166. (New) The applicator of claim 165, further comprising a layer of a second spongy flexible material on the second planar surface of the flexible support, the layer of the second spongy flexible material extending substantially the length of the flexible support.

167. (New) A cosmetic application system, comprising:
the cosmetic product applicator of claim 136; and
a container containing a cosmetic product.

168. (New) The system of claim 167, wherein the container contains at least a portion of the cosmetic product applicator.

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169. (New) The system of claim 168, wherein the container contains at least a portion of the gripping portion of the cosmetic product applicator.

170. (New) The system of claim 167, wherein the container contains the entire cosmetic product applicator.

171. (New) The system of claim 167, wherein the container includes a receptacle for containing the cosmetic product.

172. (New) The system of claim 167, wherein the container includes a lid pivotally mounted to the receptacle.

173. (New) The system of claim 172, wherein the cosmetic product applicator is sandwiched between the lid and the receptacle.

174. (New) A method of applying a cosmetic product to a surface region, comprising:

providing the cosmetic product applicator of claim 136;

loading the application portion of the cosmetic product applicator with a cosmetic product; and

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transferring the cosmetic product from the application portion of the cosmetic product applicator to a surface region.

175. (New) The method of claim 174, further comprising spreading the cosmetic product on the surface region.

176. (New) The method of claim 174, wherein the loading of the cosmetic product applicator includes impregnating the application portion of the cosmetic product applicator with the cosmetic product.

177. (New) The method of claim 174, wherein the cosmetic product is one of eye shadow, cheek blusher, make-up foundation, eyeliner, a nail-care product, liquid lip rouge, and loose powder.

178. (New) The method of claim 174, wherein the cosmetic product is an eye makeup product and the surface region includes an eyelid.

179. (New) The method of claim 174, further comprising gripping the gripping portion between a user's finger and thumb.

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180. (New) The method of claim 179, further comprising deforming the layer of the first spongy flexible material with one of the finger and thumb during the gripping.

181. (New) The method of claim 174, further comprising flexing the flexible support during the transferring.

182. (New) A method of reducing pressure exerted on skin during use of an applicator to apply a cosmetic product to the skin, comprising:

providing the applicator of claim 43;

loading the application portion with a cosmetic product;

gripping the gripping portion between a user's finger and thumb such that the first spongy material becomes deformed;

contacting the application portion against skin of the user;

moving the applicator with respect to the skin to transfer the cosmetic product to the skin; and

flexing the support during the transfer of cosmetic product to the skin,

wherein the deformation of the first spongy material and flexing of the support absorb pressure applied by the user.

183. (New) A method of reducing pressure exerted on skin during use of an applicator to apply a cosmetic product to the skin, comprising:

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providing the applicator of claim 90;
loading the application portion with a cosmetic product;
gripping the gripping portion between a user's finger and thumb such that
the first spongy material becomes deformed;
contacting the application portion against skin of the user;
moving the applicator with respect to the skin to transfer the cosmetic
product to the skin; and
flexing the support during the transfer of cosmetic product to the skin,
wherein the deformation of the first spongy material and flexing of the
support absorb pressure applied by the user.

184. (New) A method of reducing pressure exerted on skin during use of an
applicator to apply a cosmetic product to the skin, comprising:

providing the applicator of claim 136;
loading the application portion with a cosmetic product;
gripping the gripping portion between a user's finger and thumb such that
the first spongy material becomes deformed;
contacting the application portion against skin of the user;
moving the applicator with respect to the skin to transfer the cosmetic
product to the skin; and
flexing the support during the transfer of cosmetic product to the skin,

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wherein the deformation of the first spongy material and flexing of the support absorb pressure applied by the user.

185. (New) The applicator of claim 43, wherein the gripping portion is configured in the form of a handle.

186. (New) The applicator of claim 185, wherein the gripping portion is configured to be held by a user when using the applicator to apply the cosmetic product to a surface region of an individual.

187. (New) The applicator of claim 90, wherein the gripping portion is configured in the form of a handle.

188. (New) The applicator of claim 187, wherein the gripping portion is configured to be held by a user when using the applicator to apply the cosmetic product to a surface region of an individual.

189. (New) The applicator of claim 136, wherein the gripping portion is configured in the form of a handle.

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190. (New) The applicator of claim 189, wherein the gripping portion is configured to be held by a user when using the applicator to apply the cosmetic product to a surface region of an individual.

191. (New) A layered cosmetic product applicator, comprising:
a flexible handle comprising a first end of a flexible support;
an application portion at a second end of the flexible support opposite to the first end of the flexible support, the application portion being configured to apply cosmetic product to an individual; and
a layer of a first spongy flexible material on the flexible support at the handle, the first material having a greater flexibility than the flexibility of the support, wherein the handle is configured to be held by a user using the applicator to apply the cosmetic product to a surface region of an individual.

192. (New) The applicator of claim 191, wherein the flexible support includes a first planar surface and a second planar surface, the first and second planar surfaces facing away from one another.

193. (New) The applicator of claim 191, wherein the flexible support comprises a material chosen from cardboard and leather.

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194. (New) The applicator of claim 191, wherein the application portion comprises one of a tuft of bristles, a pencil brush, a feather, a foam material, a sponge material, and a baize material.

195. (New) The applicator of claim 191, wherein the first spongy flexible material is chosen from polyurethane, polyester, polyether, polyvinyl chloride, and polyethylene.

196. (New) The applicator of claim 191, further comprising a layer of a second spongy flexible material on the flexible support.

197. (New) The applicator of claim 196, wherein the first spongy flexible material is identical to the second spongy flexible material.

198. (New) The applicator of claim 196, wherein the layer of the first spongy flexible material and the layer of the second spongy flexible material are on a same surface of the flexible support.

199. (New) The applicator of claim 198, wherein the second spongy flexible material is at the application portion.

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200. (New) The applicator of claim 196, wherein the layer of the first spongy flexible material and the layer of the second spongy flexible material are on oppositely-facing surfaces of the flexible support.

201. (New) The applicator of claim 200, wherein at least part of the layer of the second spongy flexible material is at the handle.

202. (New) The applicator of claim 201, further comprising a layer of a third spongy flexible material at the application portion.

203. (New) The applicator of claim 200, wherein the flexible support comprises a material chosen from cardboard and leather.

204. (New) The applicator of claim 200, wherein at least one of the layer of the first spongy flexible material and the layer of the second spongy flexible material extends substantially an entire length of the flexible support.

205. (New) The applicator of claim 191, wherein the layer of the first spongy flexible material includes a thickness that is greater than a thickness of the flexible support.

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206. (New) The applicator of claim 191, wherein the layer of the first spongy flexible material extends substantially an entire length of the flexible support.

207. (New) A cosmetic application system, comprising:
the cosmetic product applicator of claim 191; and
a container containing a cosmetic product.

208. (New) The system of claim 207, wherein the container contains at least a portion of the cosmetic product applicator.

209. (New) The system of claim 208, wherein the container contains at least a portion of the handle of the cosmetic product applicator.

210. (New) The system of claim 207, wherein the container contains the entire cosmetic product applicator.

211. (New) The system of claim 207, wherein the container includes a receptacle for containing the cosmetic product.

212. (New) The system of claim 207, wherein the container includes a lid pivotally mounted to the receptacle.

213. (New) The system of claim 212, wherein the cosmetic product applicator is sandwiched between the lid and the receptacle.

214. (New) A method of applying a cosmetic product to a surface region, comprising:

providing the cosmetic product applicator of claim 191;

loading the application portion of the cosmetic product applicator with a cosmetic product; and

transferring the cosmetic product from the application portion of the cosmetic product applicator to a surface region.

215. (New) The method of claim 214, further comprising spreading the cosmetic product on the surface region.

216. (New) The method of claim 214, wherein the loading of the cosmetic product applicator includes impregnating the application portion of the cosmetic product applicator with the cosmetic product.

217. (New) The method of claim 214, wherein the cosmetic product is one of eye shadow, cheek blusher, make-up foundation, eyeliner, a nail-care product, liquid lip rouge, and loose powder.

218. (New) The method of claim 214, wherein the cosmetic product is an eye makeup product and the surface region includes an eyelid.

219. (New) The method of claim 214, further comprising holding the handle between a user's finger and thumb.

220. (New) The method of claim 219, further comprising deforming the layer of the first spongy flexible material with one of the finger and thumb during the holding.

221. (New) The method of claim 214, further comprising flexing the flexible support during the transferring.

222. (New) A method of reducing pressure exerted on skin during use of an applicator to apply a cosmetic product to the skin, comprising:

providing the applicator of claim 191;

loading the application portion with a cosmetic product;

gripping the handle between a user's finger and thumb such that the first spongy material becomes deformed;

contacting the application portion against skin of the user;

moving the applicator with respect to the skin to transfer the cosmetic product to the skin; and

Rule 53(b) Continuation of Appln No. 09/195,710
Attorney Docket No.: 5725.0869-02

flexing the support during the transfer of cosmetic product to the skin,
wherein the deformation of the first spongy material and flexing of the
support absorb pressure applied by the user.--

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REMARKS

Claims 23-222 remain in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-22 have been canceled, and new claims 23-222 have been added. No new matter has been added.


Prior to initial examination, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to contact the undersigned representative at 202-408-4252 to schedule a personal interview.

If there are any fees due under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17 which are not enclosed herewith, including any fees for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, please charge such fees to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

By


Jay A. Stelacone
Reg. No. 42,168

Dated: March 16, 2001

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